

Leith Neighbourhood Partnership

1830pm, Thursday, 14 June 2018

Leith Chooses Participatory Budgeting Process 2017-2018

Item number 3.4

Report number

Routine

Wards

(12) Leith Walk

(13) Leith

Council Commitments 47

Executive Summary

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is an approach to engaging citizens and giving the decision-making power on the allocation of public funds. This approach has been used by Leith Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) to allocate its Community Grants Fund (CGF) for seven years.

In August 2017, the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership made the decision to allocate all the Community Grants Fund for the financial year 2017-18 through a PB process. Simultaneously, Leith Links Community Council made a successful application to the Scottish Government's Community Choices Fund to support a local PB process. This report provides an evaluation of the PB approach "Leith Chooses" which was delivered because of the integration of the two funding streams into one process.

£eith Chooses Participatory Budgeting Process 2017-2018

1. Recommendations

The Leith Neighbourhood Partnership are asked to consider the following:

- 1.1 To distribute the total Community Grants Fund 2018-2019 through a form of Participatory Budgeting process (PB). The CGF budget for 2018-2019 will be based on the previous year's figure of £44,184 but has yet to be confirmed
- 1.2 To delegate the delivery and development of the PB process to the £eith Chooses Steering Group and agree to receive regular progress reports at Neighbourhood Partnership meetings.
- 1.3 To support the Steering Group to develop the process in a way which addresses the recognised problem that ethnic minority group applicants have had a negative experience of PB in this and previous years.
- 1.4 To review membership of the £eith Chooses Steering Group.

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2009-2010 Leith Neighbourhood Partnership piloted the use of PB to distribute CGF. Improvements have been made annually. The original aims were to
 - 2.1.1 provide opportunities for local people to have a voice in what happens in their local area.
 - 2.1.2 Provide an effective link between the local community and local democratic processes.
 - 2.1.3 Increase accessibility of small scale funding to grass roots organisations and initiatives, including those that have not been funded previously or recently.
 - 2.1.4 Encourage active involvement in the PB processes.
- 2.2 The first £eith Decides event was held in November 2010, with PB events held annually since that first year. In 2017-2018 the CGF total award for Leith was £44,184. The Leith Neighbourhood Partnership took the decision to allocate 100% of the CGF through a PB process and the Steering Group reformed including some new members.

- 2.3 Leith Links Community Council secured Scottish Government Community Choices Funding (CCF) for a Project entitled *Making Local Democracy Work*. The successful Scottish Government CCF bid included £72,500 for allocation to local projects and an additional £10,300 to support the development of the PB process.
- 2.4 One of the aims of the Community Council application was to seek to integrate the CCF PB process with the Neighbourhood Partnership's £eith Decides PB process, if the two processes were to occupy the same period, and potentially to influence development from a *bottom up* community led perspective. This new approach was discussed and agreed at a Steering Group Meeting in October 2017.
- 2.5 A Partnership was formed between City of Edinburgh Council and the three local Community Councils of Leith Links, Leith Central, Leith Harbour and Newhaven. The CGF and CCF was combined to total £116,500. Leith Links Community Council vired an additional sum from an administration budget to create a total budget of £118,000 for projects.
- 2.6 The Steering Group agreed to rebrand the newly integrated PB process with a name change from £eith Decides to £eith Chooses to reflect the combination of the two approaches, with significantly increased funds to distribute.
- 2.7 The Steering Group met weekly over a period of 8 months for a total of twenty-six meetings to plan, develop and deliver the new £eith Chooses process. In addition, sub-groups met for specific development work.

3. Main report

- 3.1 The Steering Group agreed the following key aims for £eith Chooses:
 - The approach would be innovative and integrated and would be delivered within one financial year.
 - Local themes would be identified for applicants to focus delivery of initiatives against strategic aims.
 - To encourage applications from small groups across the Leith area.
 - Where groups could evidence their ability to deliver larger scale change, to offer opportunities for funding awards to resource that ambition.
 - To provide groups with support to participate in the process and reach a wider range of applicants.
 - To engage as many people as possible in a positive and high quality participative process in which they feel able to vote for the projects they want to see delivered in their local communities.
 - To develop and demonstrate partnership between the Council and the Community Councils at all levels of the PB process.

- To promote community engagement.
 - To build on extensive engagement and consultations already undertaken by Leith Creative and North-East Locality Improvement Planning partners.
 - To support ambitions for innovative community project work.
- 3.2 Applications were invited based on themes drawn by cross-referencing the data in the Leith Creative Masterplan Blueprint and the North-East Locality Improvement Plan.
- The agreed themes were: Encouraging neighbourliness; Improving the quality of our environment; Making connections across Leith; Creating a healthier community.
- A launch event was held at Leith Community Centre in November 2017 and twenty-seven organisations attended.
- Ongoing support was given through the provision of regular drop-in and help & advice sessions to encourage new and existing contributors to develop ideas.
- £eith Chooses created a strong brand identity as a local Graphic Designer created a high-quality suite of marketing products including: leaflets, posters, banners lamppost wraps and social media logos.
- In addition, social media was utilised with the set-up of a £eith Chooses website, Facebook Page, and Twitter feed to raise awareness of the process.
- 3.3 Three funding pots were created which included: up to £500, £501-£5k, £5K-£10K.
- 3.3.1 The £500 funding pot was open to constituted and non-constituted groups and individuals. This was designed to encourage new people and groups to present their ideas without the perceived burden of responsibilities of being an 'organised group'. This was possible through the Scottish Government CCF funding stream which had fewer funding constraints than the CGF.
- 3.3.2 The £501-£5K pot was funded by the councils CGF stream. Applicants had to be constituted groups.
- 3.3.3 The £5K-£10K pot was funded by the Scottish Government's CCF stream. Applicants had to be constituted groups.
- 3.4 A voting event was held on 3 March 2018 in Leith Community Centre. The issuing of the first ever Red Weather Warning for Scotland on 1 March 2018 added complexity and tension to the pre-event process.
- 3.5 Over 1000 people attended the event with 963 voters registered. 73 organisations applied to the £eith Chooses process with 67 applications presented for voting.
- 3.6 The event was organised as follows:
- 3.6.1 Postcodes were checked to ensure eligibility. Eligibility was that voters must be 8 years plus and work, live, study or volunteer in the geographical areas bound by the two electoral wards and the three Community Councils. Voters each received a £eith Chooses wristband to mark their eligibility to vote.

- 3.6.2 Each funding pot had its own allocated room and ballot box. Applicants hosted their own information tables to raise awareness of their work and market their project. Voters could cast four card votes in each funding pot.
- 3.6.3 Refreshments were available throughout the day. Face painting and balloon modelling were provided for children. These were an integral part of setting the ethos of the event.
- 3.6.4 Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) conducted a light touch evaluation exercise, inviting people to comment on their satisfaction with the event as they concluded their voting and exited.
- 3.7 Online voting opened on 3 March for two weeks.
- 3.7.1 Voters required a unique access code which was available through the voter event day, through project applicants (to a limited extent), through Libraries and by requesting a code via e mail. Library staff were briefed to support voters. As libraries have public access computers, this was designed to remove another potential barrier to participation.
- 3.7.2 Volunteers also visited local projects to promote and support voting.

Applications received and voting outcomes for Leith chooses 2017-2018							
Funding pot (£)	Total Applications Received	Applications presented for voting	Total applied for (£)	Number of votes cast in person, at the event	Number of votes cast at the event & online	Number of successful applications	Total for projects (£)
500	17	15	7,460	2,200	9,244	11	5,460
501-5K	28	27	93,564	3,071	11,443	12	44,000
5K-10K	28	25	266,022	2,903	10,691	8	68,000
Total	73	67	367,046	8,174	31,378	31	117,460

- 3.8 The following feedback and evaluation procedures were undertaken to assess the success of the process and to identify the improvements required:
- 3.8.1 An on the day evaluation at the event by SCDC which indicated an overwhelming positive rating of the experience by visitors and participants.
- 3.8.2 Two survey monkeys carried out with 43 completing the General Survey and 24 completing the Applicants Survey (anonymous).
- 3.8.3 An evening feedback discussion event was arranged with representatives from applicant groups to allow more in-depth discussion and consideration.
- 3.8.4 Additional feedback was received from a group of local ethnic minority community organisations via e mail and a face-to-face discussion.
- 3.9 Key results gathered from the online surveys indicated that:

- 3.9.1 The majority of those who responded felt that £eith Chooses Facebook page was the most effective media source used to promote the process (44% of Applicants/ 52% of Voters).
- 3.9.2 For those who applied for funding, attending the event to promote the work and aims of their groups (47%) were rated more important than the chance to win some money (31%)
- 3.9.3 For those who attended the event, the chance to support and vote and to help groups to win some money was rated the most important thing about the event (56%).
- 3.9.4 Of those who applied for funding, 58% said that they would apply next year, 29% were not sure and 12% would not reapply.
- 3.9.5 The majority of those who responded to the surveys felt that online voting was a good way of involving more people in the process (78% of Applicants, 71% of Voters), although the majority also felt that the online voting would benefit from improvement (72% of Applicants, 74% of Voters). A majority felt that a mix of in-person and on-line voting was preferable, to either only in-person or, only online voting.
- 3.10 Initial conclusions have been reached after consideration of the feedback by the Steering Group. That £eith Chooses PB process for 2017-2018 was partly successful as the following were met:
- The allocation of the total CGF, CCF and LLCC of £118,000.
 - Citizen participation had a direct impact on the funding allocation.
 - Citizens had an opportunity to input views on the rules governing the process.
 - The process had a deliberative element.
 - The process sought to redistribute resources based on the greatest need.
 - The process was designed to ensure that citizens could monitor the public spend.
 - Both large and small constituted and non-constituted groups had the opportunity to apply for funds.
 - Community engagement was high. Increased numbers of people participated in both attending the event and in voting online.
 - Community organisations networking was an integral focus at the event.
 - The Steering Group worked in partnership to develop, plan, and deliver a new rebranded and innovative process.
 - City of Edinburgh Council and the three Community Councils developed closer working relationships because of the process.

3.11 However, the Leith Chooses Steering Group have acknowledged that:

- The cultural diversity of Leith was not reflected in the votes cast by citizens and improvements are required to successfully address this problem.
- Small (and new) applicant groups do not tend to benefit from the process, compared to bigger and longer established groups.
- Members of the Steering Group felt constrained by the Council's IT and Security limitations.
- The deliberation of projects felt cumbersome due to IT challenges and that improvements are required to facilitate online voting opportunities.
- After the vote, a perception emerged that resources were redistributed based on familiarity and popular appeal, and not necessarily on the greatest need.
- A very high level of staff and volunteer work hours are required to plan, develop, and deliver the process.
- The issues indicated by the above may be complex to resolve. Restructuring of the process and monitoring processes have not yet been designed.

4. Measures of success

4.1 The following measures have been assessed to help to determine the overall success of Leith Chooses as an approach to involving local people in decision-making:

- Numbers of people participating.
- Numbers of applications received.
- Evidence that participation is reflective of the democratic make-up of the local area.
- Numbers of Leith Chooses awards to grass roots organisations and initiatives, including those not previously funded.

5. Financial impact

5.1 The CGF is contained within the Council's budget. The CCF is contained within the Scottish Government's budget. Delivery costs were funded by both the CCF and by the North-East Locality's Lifelong Learning Team.

5.2 Decisions taken for 2018-2019 will impact upon the allocation for the new CGF budget.

- 5.3 The decision as to whether Community Council Partners will seek external CCF in 2018-2019 has not yet been made. [*The outcome of an application would be known in September/October 2018*].

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no adverse risks or policy impacts from this report. The scale of Leith Decides/Chooses 2018-2019 will be smaller without additional CCF. Solutions must be sought to counter the negative experience of ethnic minority community applicants.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 Equalities Impact Assessments will be required within the applicant's project reports.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The impacts of this report have been considered in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties and there are no adverse effects.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 The Steering Group have: based proposals on previous experience and feedback, held an open launch event, held drop-in sessions in Leith Library, McDonald Road Library and Restalrig Hub, given e mail support, given individual group support, met unsuccessful applicants to offer feedback, held a face-to-face evaluation discussion event, held a face-to-face evaluation discussion with ethnic minority group applicants, conducted a Survey Monkey evaluation for applicants, created a Survey Monkey evaluation for all citizens. In addition, SCDC conducted an evaluative exercise.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Tiago Peixoto <https://democracyspot.net/2012/09/12/participatory-budgeting-seven-defining-characteristics/>
- 10.2 Leith Creative report: <http://www.leithcreative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/LC-Blueprint-2017.pdf>
- 10.3 North East Locality Improvement Plan:
<http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/localityimprovementplans>

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11. Appendices

Appendix 1

	Name of applicant	Grant	Total Requested	Total Received
1	2018 Commemoration of Leith Casualties of the First World War	Small	£500	No Award
2	Art outside the Police Box	Small	£500	£500
3	Big Brunch - Individual St James Church	Small	£500	£500
4	Choose Happiness	Small	£475	£475
5	Family Fun Street Games and Dance	Small	£500	£500
6	Good Clean Fun (Leithers don't Litter)	Small	£500	£500
7	Help 154 Scouts (Leith) go camping!	Small	£500	£500
8	Leith Fort Residents Group	Small	£500	£500
9	Ragged University	Small	£500	No Award
10	Restalrig Road and Railway Path - Cleaning up Restalrig Road	Small	£500	£500
11	Safer by Sound	Small	£500	No Award
12	See Me' - Portrait Project with Young People	Small	£485	£485
13	Seniors Tea Party, CLASP	Small	£500	£500
14	Shelly Coat's First Foot (and Tam's Last Blast) Altered States Theatre Group	Small	£500	No Award
15	Taobh na Pairce Primary School - Film camera and film making workshops	Small	£500	£500
1	All Together - Flooring and lighting	Medium	£4,450	£4,450
2	Beyond Gender	Medium	£4,888	£4,038

3	Bike Shelter - Scooter Rack, St Mary's Primary	Medium	£2,152	£2,152
4	Broughton P S Parent Council - A growing community	Medium	£2,590	No Award
5	Community Picnic, St Mary's Star of the Sea	Medium	£1,200	No Award
6	Destiny Angels - 2 x community events	Medium	£3,636	No Award
7	Dr Bell's Family Centre, Summer Programme	Medium	£5,000	£5,000
8	Fort out of school club	Medium	£1,181	No Award
9	Friends of Pilrig Park - Lantern Parade	Medium	£1,929	No Award
10	Gala Day, Victoria Primary PTA	Medium	£1,000	No Award
11	Hidden Door Festival - Outreach workshops/guided tours	Medium	£4,515	£4,515
12	Invisible Cities	Medium	£1,255	£1,255
13	Leith Community Archers	Medium	£3,600	No Award
14	Leith Community Cinema	Medium	£3,000	£3,000
15	Leith Fab Cricket Club	Medium	£4,656	£4,656
16	Leith Festival	Medium	£3,875	No Award
17	Leith Late - A wall is a screen	Medium	£3,500	£3,500
18	MELA Songs of Zimbabwe	Medium	£5,000	No Award
19	Mustard Seed Edinburgh	Medium	£4,475	£4,475
20	Nepal Scotland Association	Medium	£3,925	No Award
21	People Know How	Medium	£4,000	No Award
22	Play equipment Leith, St Andrew's Playgroup	Medium	£4,703	No Award
23	Shakti - A young people's residential	Medium	£5,000	No Award
24	Super Power Agency	Medium	£3,492	No Award
25	Tailor Ed Foundation	Medium	£1,959	£1,959
26	The Junction: Young People, Health and Wellbeing	Medium	£2,500	No Award
27	Trim Trail, Leith Primary Parent Council	Medium	£5,000	£5,000
1	A.R.T. Safternoon, O.O.T.B. And Pulse of the Place	Large	£9,725	No Award
2	Be United	Large	£9,605	No Award
3	Bright Light - Stronger Families	Large	£9,520	No Award
4	Citadel Youth Centre	Large	£8,980	£8,980

5	Creative Electric - Arts	Large	£10,000	£10,000
6	Edinburgh Tool Library, Accessibility Leith	Large	£9,690	£9,690
7	Feniks Counselling	Large	£5,085	No Award
8	Forth Valley Health 4 You CIC	Large	£9,974	No Award
9	Friends of the Water of Leith Basin	Large	£9,500	No Award
10	Leith Central CC/Leith Links CC/Leith Harbour and Newhaven CC - Feasibility study	Large	£6,168	No Award
11	Leith DIY Skate Parks	Large	£9,000	£9,000
12	Leith Heritage Group (Scottish Historic Buildings)	Large	£7,950	£723
13	Leith Piano Hack #Piano Drome	Large	£6,636	No Award
14	Leith Theatre Trust	Large	£10,000	£10,000
15	Leith Vixens RFC	Large	£10,000	£10,000
16	Leonard Cheshire Scotland, Enliven Leith	Large	£9,091	No Award
17	Multicultural Family Base	Large	£9,766	No Award
18	Out of the Blue Leith Hub Meanwhile Use	Large	£9,613	£9613
19	Plus One Mentoring Leith	Large	£9,706	No Award
20	Projekt 42	Large	£9,994	£9,994
21	Sikh Sanjog Kickstart	Large	£9,988	No Award
22	Strange Town	Large	£9,935	No Award
23	The Men of Leith Men's Shed	Large	£10,000	No Award
24	VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian	Large	£10,000	No Award
25	Wee Green - "Good local food"	Large	£10,000	No Award
1	Beer Money	Small	£500	Withdrawn
2	Leith Mercury Multimedia news platform	Small	£500	Withdrawn
3	Rock 'n' Roll Edinburgh	Medium	£5000	Withdrawn
4	Custom Lane Design Workshops	Large	£10,000	Withdrawn
5	Leith School of Art	Large	£6,236	Withdrawn
6	MELA	Large	£10,000	Withdrawn

Appendix 2



